

Message Text

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15

ACTION IO-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ILO, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN VIEWS ON ILO ISSUES

SUMMARY: NIGERIAN LABOR PERMSEC KOKU EXPRESSES LITTLE INTEREST IN AGAIN CHAIRING ILO STRUCTURING COMMITTEE BUT LEAVES DOOR OPEN FOR POSSIBLE DRAFT. NIGERIA RESERVES RIGHT TO FOLLOW INDEPENDENT LINE ON ILO STRUCTURE QUESTIONS. KOKU HOPES TO BE CONSULTED ABOUT CANDIDATES FOR TOP ILO POSITIONS. END SUMMARY

1. NIGERIAN DELEGATION TO THIS JUNE'S ILO CONFERENCE WILL BE LED BY COMMISSIONER FOR LABOR CHIEF A. ENAHORO. KOKU WILL ACT AS DEPUTY LEADER. REST OF DELEGATION AS YET UNKNOWN, BUT WILL INCLUDE UNITED LABOR CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY CHIEF E. O. ODEYEMI. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS ULC PRESIDENT KALTUNGO WILL ALSO ATTEND AS GUEST OF AALC BUT WILL NOT BE PART OF OFFICIAL NIGERIAN DELEGATION. NAMES OF REMAINDER OF DELEGATION WILL BE SENT WHEN AVAILABLE.

2. DURING DISCUSSION OF FORTHCOMING ILO CONFERENCE, LABOR PERMSEC S. O. KOKU STATED HE WOULD PREFER NOT TO CHAIR ILO STRUCTURING COMMITTEE DURING THIS YEAR'S ILO CONFERENCE

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BUT LATER INDICATED HE MIGHT ACCEPT DRAFT IF APPROACHED.

KOKU NOTED HE WAS DRAFTED LAST YEAR BY LATE DIRECTOR GENERAL JENKS AND OTHERS TO CHAIR THIS COMMITTEE AND WAS PLEASED TO HAVE BEEN OF SERVICE. HE NOW FEELS HE HAS HAD ENOUGH OF THIS SUBJECT BUT REALIZES IMPORTANCE OF THIS COMMITTEE AND NEED FOR MODERATE CHAIRMAN TO KEEP MORE EXTREME GROUPS SUCH AS GROUP OF 77 UNDER CONTROL. HE ALSO REALIZES NECESSITY FOR ENGLISH SPEAKING AFRICANS TO PLAY MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN ILO AFFAIRS. KOKU THEREFORE INTENDS TO KEEP OPEN MIND ON QUESTION OF CHAIRING COMMITTEE BUT NOTED HE MAY HAVE TO SPEND CONSIDERABLE TIME AS ACTING HEAD OF NIGERIAN DELEGATION, ESPECIALLY IF COMMISSIONER ENAHORO IS UNABLE TO ATTEND ENTIRE CONFERENCE. (FYI: KOKU HAD SAME PROBLEMS IN 1973 CONFERENCE BUT STILL FOUND TIME TO CHAIR STRUCTURING COMMITTEE. EMABSSY BELIEVES HE WILL DO SO AGAIN THIS YEAR, BUT WANTS TO BE PERSUADED AND ASSURED OF HIS VALUE, PARTICULARLY BY HIGH-RANKING ILO AND US GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. END FYI)

3. KOKU REFERRED TO DELIBERATIONS OF STRUCTURING COMMITTEE DURING 1973 CONFERENCE AND NOTED COMMITTEE HAD DECIDED TO REQUEST COMMENTS FROM ALL ILO MEMBERS ON STRUCTURING QUESTION. NIGERIAN IN RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST GAVE A VERY NON-COMMITTAL ANSWER. KOKU EXPLAINED THAT NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT PREFERS TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT OTHERS THINK BEFORE MAKING ANY FIRM DECISIONS. HE NOTED FOR EXAMPLE, THAT DECISIONS MADE AT RECENT OAU LABOR MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN CONAKRY ARE NOT BINDING ON AFRICAN DELEGATIONS TO ILO. NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT WILL NOT NECESSARILY FOLLOW THESE OAU SUGGESTIONS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHICH STEM FROM ARAB NATIONS. KOKU FURTHER NOTED THAT AS CHAIRMAN OF STRUCTURING COMMITTEE LAST YEAR, HE COULD APPRECIATE NEED FOR SOME CHANGES IN ILO STRUCTURE BUT BELIEVES THESE SHOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH CAUTION AND FULL HEARINGS.

4. TURNING TO NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL AND NEED FOR FILLING SEVERAL TOP OFFICES IN ILO, KOKU EXPRESSED HOPE THAT BLANCHARD WILL CONSULT FULLY WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE STRONG BACKGROUND AND INTEREST IN ILO AFFAIRS BEFORE SELECTING HIS NEW OFFICERS. KOKU FEELS MOST OF PROBLEMS FACED BY LATE DG JENKS STEMMED PRIMARILY FROM HIS FAILURE TO CONSULT WITH OTHERS BEFORE NAMING HIS TOP AIDES.

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